

# THE STATUS REPORT

Charles F. Hurley Bldg., 19 Staniford St., 6<sup>th</sup> FL, Boston, MA 02114  
Web: [www.mass.gov/women](http://www.mass.gov/women) E-mail: [mcsww@state.ma.us](mailto:mcsww@state.ma.us) Phone: 617-626-6520



## January 19<sup>th</sup> Deadline to Nominate Unsung Heroines is Fast Approaching!

This year the Commission is expanding the Unsung Heroines Initiative we have undertaken for the past two years. We are searching for the Unsung Heroines of Massachusetts who we know are doing remarkable things on a daily basis to make our communities better places to live and work. It is our goal to honor one of these special women from each of the Commonwealth's 351 cities and towns as their community's Unsung Heroine of 2006. A State House Reception in their honor is planned for March 3, 2006. This event is a prelude to the MCSW's 3rd Annual Unsung Heroines Awards Luncheon, which will be held on March 22, 2006 at the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel in Boston, MA.

The women we are looking for are living and working in your community - they don't make the news, but surely make the difference in their neighborhoods. It is our hope that by singing their praises we will inspire others to get involved locally to change things for the better for everyone.

This is an ambitious goal but with your help we can succeed. We would appreciate it very much if you could assist our search committee to identify and nominate women from your community or organization who should be considered for this honor. Your advice and assistance in getting the word out to your organization about the nomination process would be so valuable. We do not want to overlook any woman who deserves to be nominated.

**Because the deadline for nominating someone is January 19<sup>th</sup>, timely action is required.** The nomination form is available for download on the MCSW Web site, [www.mass.gov/women](http://www.mass.gov/women), or you may call the MCSW office at (617) 626-6520 to request a copy. Any Massachusetts resident may nominate someone. The MCSW looks forward to receiving your nomination!



### 2005 Unsung Heroines

*Marie Celestin of Boston*

*Linda Herman of Hull*

*Deborah Netto of Falmouth*

*Lee Nugent of Revere*

### 2004 Unsung Heroines

*Isabel Melendez of Lawrence*

*Gloria Torres of Springfield*

*West Roxbury Friends of Rosie's Place*

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## Executive Director Corner

As you read this, we prepare to close 2005 on a high note and are gearing up for a very active winter and spring for the women of Massachusetts. We are all still enjoying the aftermath of the tremendously inspiring and uplifting first Massachusetts Conference for Women. Nearly 3,000 women convened December 7 in the new Boston Convention Center – the energy and the power in the room was palpable! The audience laughed, learned and even shed a tear or two listening to the marvelous keynote speakers – Governor Ann Richards, Bertice Berry and Lorraine Monroe. They then had the opportunity to select from twenty break out sessions, led by leaders in the fields of health care, personal development, media, business and more. The MCSW was proud to be affiliated with this important initiative and is already engaged in making sure that next year's Conference will be even bigger and better.

We are now focusing on our statewide Unsung Heroines Award Initiative and need your help in finding an Unsung Heroine from every city and town in Massachusetts. You know best the women in your community who are making a difference – quietly, behind the scenes and without fanfare or recognition. We want to thank them and hold them up as models whose work can be replicated throughout the state. We encourage you to let us know who they are – send in a nomination by January 19. Forms are available on our Web site or by calling our office. Honorees selected from this group will be presented at the Third Annual Unsung Heroines Awards Luncheon on March 22 at the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel.

We are also pleased to be part of a coalition of organizations that is working with the Boston Women's Fund to present "The State of Women in Massachusetts" on January 25 from 11-1:30 at The State House. This address, similar to the traditional ones offered in January by mayor's, governor's and the President, will focus on what the women of Massachusetts need in terms of the state budget, legislation and public policy. We hope you will mark your calendars and join us for what promises to be a powerful event.

Thus 2006 will begin with a bang, only to be followed by many wonderful events and activities during National Women's History Month in March and beyond. Hold onto your hats and stay tuned for much more to come during what will surely be a phenomenal year for us all!



## Save the Date for January 25<sup>th</sup> "The State of Women and Girls"

Similar to traditional State of the State, City, Union, etc. messages offered this month by public officials, the first "State of Women & Girls in Massachusetts" address will be delivered on January 25, 2006 at the Massachusetts State House between 11:00 a.m. – Noon, followed by additional programming until 1 p.m.

This event, spearheaded by the Boston Women's Fund in collaboration with over 25 community organizations, including the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women, is planned to ensure that women and women's issues are included in significant budget, legislative and public policy debate.

The forum will offer a gender lens to examine the impact of the state budget on women and children in the areas of: healthcare, violence, poverty, childcare, housing, education, and immigrant issues. Data and research will be augmented by testimonials from those personally impacted.

Other co-sponsoring organizations include: the MA Caucus of Women Legislators, The Women's Union, MassCEDAW, NOW – Mass Chapter, The Adbar Ethiopian Women's Alliance, Alternatives Unlimited, The Boston Women's Commission, The Center for New Words, Community Works, Girls' Coalition of Greater Boston, Homes for Families, New Freedwoman Project, Planned Parenthood, Rosie's Place, Tufts University, and several others.

Organizers hope to fill the State House to overflowing with women from throughout the Commonwealth, so please share with your networks and plan to join us on January 25 so that women's voices will be heard! For more information, contact Catherine at the Boston Women's Fund at (617) 725-0035.

## First Massachusetts Conference for Women A Success!

*Brought to You in Conjunction with The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women*

Nearly 3,000 women attended the first annual Massachusetts Conference for Women on Dec. 7, 2005 at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center. The daylong event featured more than 75 nationally recognized experts and female leaders addressing women on business, career, and financial concerns, as well as family, health and education issues. Many organizations ranging from Xerox to the League of Women Voters were represented at the exhibit hall.

The tone of the day was upbeat as women were encouraged to take care of themselves as well their communities. Advice on how to achieve a well-rounded and fulfilling life was given in tandem with hints on how to succeed in the workplace. Encouraging women to run for election, to support each other and to create lasting friendships, business relationships and mentorships were other common themes. There were also panels targeted at serious issues that girls confront on a daily basis. In sum, conference attendees were extremely positive in their evaluations of the conference.

In case you were unable to attend the conference, you may purchase audio CD's, which were recorded liveduring the conference, at: <http://www.fltwood.com/onsite/magovernors/2005/> or call, (800) 353-1830.

Or, view the online photo gallery of the conference at

<http://www.mass.gov/women/calendar/MAWomensConf2005photos.htm>



Above: Keynote speaker, Bertice Berry, Ph.D., is pictured at the Dec. 7 MA Conference for Women Breakfast.



Above: Robin Rich, Assistant Executive Director of the LWV of MA pictured at their booth.



Above: MCSW Executive Director Linda Brantley and Outreach Coordinator Jill Ashton at the MCSW's booth.



Above: MCSW Chair Kathleen Casavant, Commissioner Roseanna Means, MD, & Executive Director Linda Brantley

## MCSW Legislative Updates

### **S.2289, An Act to Provide for Study About Trafficking of Persons and Involuntary Servitude**

On December 14, 2005, the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women voted to endorse Senate bill 2289, *An Act to Provide for Study About Trafficking of Persons and Involuntary Servitude*. Sponsored by Senator Mark Montigny, this bill provides for the establishment of a special commission to study the issue of trafficking of persons and involuntary servitude in the Commonwealth. The special commission would include, but not be limited to, the following research: the prevalence, as well as the harms and consequences, of trafficking and involuntary servitude on victims; and making sure that current social services and laws can respond to victims as necessary. This special commission would be the building block necessary to establishing human trafficking laws in Massachusetts.

Human Trafficking is the modern practice of slavery; after drug dealing and arms, it is the third largest criminal industry in the world. According to [www.humantrafficking.org](http://www.humantrafficking.org), "Human trafficking refers to transportation of persons for forced labor, sexual exploitation or other illicit activities. It is estimated that more than 1 million people are trafficked annually around the world; some experts say it could be double that." Although human trafficking and involuntary servitude is a complicated crime to measure, statistics show that 80% of trafficking victims are women and 50% are minors.

### **Public Hearing to be Held for An Act to Provide Health Education in Schools (S.102/H.1641)**

The above bill will be heard by the Joint Committee on Education on Tuesday, January 31st at 1pm in room B-2 at the State House. This bill requires the implementation of health education into core curriculums for all school districts in the Commonwealth. If passed, schools would be required to teach adequate age-appropriate health education defined as the ***fourteen standards of health*** by the Department of Education.

The fourteen standards of health include nutrition, physical activity, mental health, safety and injury prevention, reproduction and sexuality, substance abuse prevention, violence prevention, consumer health, growth and development, family life, interpersonal relationships, disease prevention, ecological health, and community health.

The MCSW has endorsed this bill and will testify in its favor at the hearing. Representative Alice Wolf is the lead sponsor for H.1641. For more information, contact her office at (617) 722-2400. Senator Joan Menard is the Lead Sponsor for S.102 and she can be reached at (617) 722-1114. Anyone can attend and testify at the hearing or they can send in letters of support. Attending hearings and/or testifying is a great way for people who are not currently involved in the government process to "get their feet wet" and of course, it helps with the passage of the bill!

**Health Education for Our Children is a Basic Need...**

**"Half the costs of illness are wasted on conditions that could be prevented." -Dr. Joseph Pizzorno**

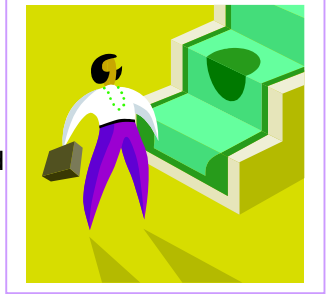
**For more information on MCSW's legislative activity, please contact:**

**Jill Ashton, MCSW Outreach Coordinator**

**E-mail: [mcsw@state.ma.us](mailto:mcsw@state.ma.us) / Phone: 617-626-6520**

## MA Women's Research Collaborative

The first meeting of the Massachusetts Women's Research Collaborative was held on December 1 and was attended by over 15 researchers on women's issues from around the state. Hosted by the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women, the meeting explored how research on women and women's issues can be better utilized to improve the lives of Massachusetts's women.



The meeting was convened to begin to achieve the following outcomes: more gender aggregated data/research on MA women and women's issues; enhanced knowledge, distribution and utilization of this data/research; a closer link between researchers and those who can most use their work to affect change, i.e. legislators, advocates and public policymakers; increased communication, collaboration and mutual assistance; a clearer picture of women in Massachusetts that can be utilized by policymakers and advocates; and ultimately, better laws and policies that accurately reflect the needs of Massachusetts women.

Discussion focused on: what research exists specific to Massachusetts and what research is needed; how can interested parties work together to ensure that what is needed gets done; how researchers can be better connected with those needing their work; what collaborative activities might be possible; how research on women can be made universally accessible; and how this research be better used to create positive change for the women of Massachusetts.

Potential next steps include: development of a directory of Massachusetts researchers; a policy conference; legislative briefings; an online message board and/or list serve; and an online research library. Another meeting will be scheduled early in 2006 to continue discussions and plan future action.

## Berkshire County Commission in Search of New Member

The Berkshire County Commission on the Status of Women (BCCSW) is in search of a new Commissioner to fill a recently vacated seat on the board. The Commission was codified in Section 66 of chapter 3 of the General Laws in 2004, which established a board of nine commissioners to hear input, collect data and propose solutions for concerns of Berkshire women.

Service on the Berkshire County Commission on the Status of Women is an opportunity to affect positive change for women and girls in their county. Berkshire County Commissioners currently include: Martha Almgren, Carol Harty, Carole Hilderbrand, Pam Malumphy, Mary K. O'Brien, Eve Schatz, Erin Sullivan, and Eleanore Velez.

The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women (MCSW), which is the appointing authority for the BCCSW, is soliciting applications to fill a North County vacancy. The MCSW encourages all who are interested to apply. Applications are due January 15, 2006 and are available at [www.mass.gov/women](http://www.mass.gov/women) or by contacting the Commission office at (617) 626-6520.

### *Did you know?*

On December 14, 1961, the first President's Commission on the Status of Women was established to examine discrimination against women and ways to eliminate it.

**-National Women's History Project**



## Upcoming Noteworthy Events & Happenings

⇒ **January 25, 2006, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm: The State of Women and Girls –**

The women's version of the traditional State of the State and City messages given by public officials. To be held at the MA State House Grand Staircase, Boston

⇒ **March 3, 2006, 1:00 – 4:00 pm: MCSW Unsung Heroine Awards Presentation**

To be held at the MA State House Grand Staircase, Boston

⇒ **March 8, 2006, 7:30-9:00 am: International Women's Day**

To be held at Simmons College, Boston MA

⇒ **March 22, 2006, 11:45 am – 2:00 pm: 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual MCSW Unsung Heroines Awards Luncheon**

To be held at the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel



If you have an event that you would like added to our future newsletters, or Web site, please e-mail the information to: [Paula.Daddona@state.ma.us](mailto:Paula.Daddona@state.ma.us)

### Commission Officers & Members FY 2006

**Kathleen Casavant, Chair, Chelsea**

Martha Chadwick, Boston

Gloria Coney, Roxbury

Lianne Cook, Salem

Helen Corbett, Danvers

Donna Finneran, Mattapan

Marianne Fleckner, Westford

Mary Grant, PhD, North Adams

**Catherine Greene, Esq., Secretary, Brighton**

**Elizabeth Houlihan, Vice-Chair, Falmouth**

Helen Jackson, MD, W. Roxbury

Mary Reardon Johnson, East Longmeadow

Judith Kurland, Brookline

Roseanna Means, MD, Wellesley

Angela Menino, Hyde Park

Carol Pimentel, New Bedford

Susana Segat, Cambridge

**Greer Tan Swiston, Treasurer, Newton**

Kateri Walsh, Springfield

### Commission Staff & Interns

Linda Brantley, Executive Director

Paula Daddona, Program Manager

Jill Ashton, Outreach Coordinator

Darlene Kelter, Administrative Assistant

#### Interns:

Marianne Bellesorte

Johanna Bernstein

Amanda Dye

Stacie Hargis

**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**

**VISIT US AT:**

**WWW.MASS.GOV/WOMEN**

### The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women

19 Staniford St., 6<sup>th</sup> FL  
Boston, MA 02114

#### Phone:

617-626-6520

#### Fax:

617-626-6530

#### E-Mail:

[mcsw@state.ma.us](mailto:mcsw@state.ma.us)

**Do you have questions or comments about this newsletter?  
If so, please send an e-mail to: [Paula.Daddona@state.ma.us](mailto:Paula.Daddona@state.ma.us)**